



The “Opportunity for All” Education Agenda

Led by Congressman Neguse

In March 2022, Congressman Joe Neguse unveiled the “Opportunity for All” Education Agenda to ensure equal opportunity for all students pre-k through college. As the father of a three-year-old, Congressman Neguse has seen firsthand the benefits of high-quality early childhood education in his own daughter’s life. Neguse also brings a unique understanding of higher-education, spending years as a Regent at the University of Colorado, Boulder working to make college more affordable and accessible.

Congressman Neguse’s agenda is the outcome of focused community conversations with educators, students and local leaders across Colorado’s Second Congressional district whose passion for high-quality education and special education programs led to the development of Neguse’s three key priorities:

Lowering Child Care Costs

- Neguse has championed proposals in Congress to cut child care costs to ensure no family pays more than 7% of their income for care and to enact universal preschool for 3 and 4-year-olds. Both proposals recently passed the House through the *Build Back Better Act* and would ensure every parent has an opportunity to provide high-quality early childhood education for their children.

Investing in Teachers and Students

- Neguse recently unveiled the *Teachers Are Leaders Act* to expand leadership opportunities for K-12 teachers and address high teacher attrition rates, promoting educational opportunity in the classroom;
- Neguse has long-championed a proposal to provide full funding for the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, to ensure that every child has equal opportunity to succeed and schools and teachers are provided adequate special education funding to equip every student. He recently secured a funding increase for the program, and is continuing to work to see the program fully funded.

Making it Easier to Get a College Degree for Less

- Neguse’s *Affordable College Textbooks Act* would expand access to open education resources, and increase funding for the innovative pilot program that allows college students to access class material for free online.
- Neguse’s *Reverse Transfer Efficiency Act* works to make the transfer process easier for community college students, allowing more young people to earn an Associate’s Degree for credit already completed.



- Neguse’s *Advancing Competency Based Education Act* will help college students earn a degree in less time for a lower cost, expanding higher education opportunities to students with non-traditional college paths.

QUOTES OF SUPPORT:

Kevin Welner, Director of the National Education Policy Center: “These proposals are carefully designed to close opportunity gaps that would otherwise hold back students at different points along their educational journey.”

Christina N. Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Early Childhood Council of Larimer County: “Families in our community are currently spending up to 40% of their annual income on child care costs, and as a result, thousands of families are unable to afford quality care. Given what we know about the importance of the first five years of life for a child’s health and well-being, I am so grateful to Congressman Neguse for continuing to be a champion in this space. It is long past time that we fund early education in this country as a public good.”

Amie Baca-Oehlert, High School Counselor and President of the Colorado Education Association: “In the time of an unprecedented educator shortage, Rep. Neguse recognizes the need for us to do everything we can to attract and retain high quality educators. He understands that the foundation of our democracy lies in our public schools and that educators and students, no matter where they live, what their abilities are, or how much their parents make, deserve to have all the resources they need to set them up for future success in life.”

Frank Reeves, Superintendent, East Grand School District: “Congressman Neguse believes in improving our education system. Even as a candidate, he formed an educational advisory committee and his tireless efforts in the house reflect these values. His 3 pronged approach will make a positive impact on ALL children, pre-school through college. Making Pre-School more affordable and accessible is not only good for our youngest students, it is imperative for our economy. When adults can’t work because they have to stay home with their children, our economy is impacted. Increasing the number of prospective teachers will help to fill the numerous unfilled positions that many districts have right now. Making college more accessible and affordable for all will also have a positive impact on our school system and our economy. I believe this plan will also begin to bring back the respect for education that has been lost in recent years which will lead to more adults seeing education as a viable profession.”

Medora Huseby, Associate Professor, Colorado State University: “Education should be accessible to everyone. College is expensive. Student debt is increasing. A straightforward solution is to use open educational resources (OER). CSU has saved over \$100,000.00



since 2017—simply by using high quality free of charge materials—and that is with just one instructor in a few classes.”

Nicole Hensel, Colorado Parent: “As a new mom, finding adequate and affordable childcare for my infant has been nearly impossible. I’m spending half my paycheck on childcare rather than saving for college or future educational expenses. Our children are our future: Childcare costs impact how or if people decide to expand their families and it shouldn’t be an economic burden. We should be investing in our future.”

Front Range Community College President Andrew Dorsey: “Front Range Community College is excited and encouraged to see Congressman Neguse’s education plan. We have seen firsthand how innovations like reverse transfer and open educational resources can make a huge difference for students. We look forward to working with the Congressman to continue to improve access to higher education.”